



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

UPDATED HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No:

Date: 04 January 2008

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members on the recent update of the Human Resources Strategy.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : Andrew Beale
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Tel : 0115 967 0880

Email : andrew.beale@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries
Contact :** Elisabeth Reeson
(0115) 967 5889 elisabeth.reeson@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The first service Human Resources Strategy was agreed by the Fire & Rescue Authority in August 2003. This Strategy concentrated on the challenges facing the Service in the immediate period following the signing of the Heads of Agreement, which marked the end of a period of industrial action. In particular, it focused on the implementation of the Integrated Personal Development system, new pay structures, review of the National Conditions of Service for Fire Services, rescinding of the disciplinary and appointment regulations, emphasis on risk reduction and increased regional working.
- 1.2 This was a period of significant change for the Service and the Human Resources Strategy, aligned to the first Integrated Risk Management Plan, set out the way in which the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service would implement the modernisation agenda.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The Service has made good progress in taking forward the aims of its first Human Resources Strategy. The key areas of the IPDS, flexible working, community safety, revised terms and conditions of service and collaborative regional working are now embedded within working arrangements. Whilst there remain aspects that require further development, these areas now form part of the Business Plans formulated each year by the Human Resources teams. The Human Resource Plan for 2007/08 was considered by this committee at its meeting on 4 April.
- 2.2 The draft Strategy has been shaped by a number of external factors that act as key benchmarks for the service in terms of indicators of good Human Resource management. These include the National Framework, CFOA National HR Strategy, Regional HR Strategy, National Learning and Development Framework and National Equalities Strategy (currently under consultation). These aims and objectives have been incorporated into the Strategy where appropriate.
- 2.3 In view of these developments, the Human Resources Strategy for the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service has been updated and realigned to ensure that it reflects the changing environment in which the Service now operates. The revised Strategy is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.4 The CFOA National HR Strategy framework has been used to structure the Strategic Vision for people management within the Service in terms of Leadership, Organisational Development, Developing the Skills and Capacity of the Workforce, Resourcing, Recognition and Reward, Developing the Capacity of HR.

- 2.5 As well as establishing benchmarks and indicators, the Strategy seeks to establish local principles that will drive and be central to HR management within the Service. These are set out as Aims and Objectives and include the core values which will underpin all Service activity.
- 2.6 Finally, individual workstreams are identified for each HR team as key priority areas for the next three years. These priorities will be built into Business Plans and delivered within the indicative timescales.
- 2.7 This Strategy will form the basis for the development of future HR Business Plans and will underpin the Service Community Safety Plan 2007-10.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the adoption of the Human Resources Strategy, however there will be costs associated with the implementation of detailed workstreams in due course. Such costs would be included within the normal budgetary setting process.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

The Strategy sets out the priorities for the development and management of the Service's workforce during the period of the current Community Safety Plan and subsequently will impact significantly across a whole range of personnel service delivery issues. The detail of how this will impact in each area is summarised within the Strategy document.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The promotion of equality and diversity issues are inherent in the aims and objectives of the Strategy and are of particular relevance within the Equalities strand of the document. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The adoption of an effective Human Resource Strategy is integral to the achievement of the Community Safety Plan and underpins the strategic objectives of the Service. Many of the drivers relate to changes to employment legislation or conditions of service, and to nationally adopted performance indicators. The adoption of the Strategy will contribute to the management of the corporate risk associated with the delivery of these objectives.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the revised Human Resource Strategy is endorsed by the Human Resources Committee and submitted to the Fire & Rescue Authority for approval.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



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HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

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FOREWORD

The last Human Resources Strategy was adopted by the Fire Authority in August 2003. The Strategy was developed at a time of great change for the Fire Service, and centred on the recommendations of the Government White Paper "Our Fire and Rescue Service", the outcomes of the Bain Review and the implementation of the first Integrated Risk Management Plan.

The Strategy itself set out the ways in which the modernisation agenda would be taken forward and the pivotal role that effective Human Resource management would play in the change process.

There were many challenges facing the Service at this time: a period of industrial dispute had just ended, national terms and conditions of service for Firefighters and salary structures had fundamentally changed, a new system of Integrated Personal Development was at the forefront of the a competency based learning and development system. The tenets of the "old style" service such as the Disciplinary Regulations and Appointment Regulations were replaced by new procedures which were less centrally driven, and Fire and Rescue Services were encouraged to become more community based and responsive to local needs, governed by performance management principles which would shape and evaluate service provision.

These were significant challenges to an organisation which had experienced minimal change in the previous thirty years.

No-one would deny that the process of effecting change has been a painless process, nor that the task is complete. However many of the objectives set out in the original Strategy have been taken forward and are now embedded within the management culture of the organisation.

This Strategy is intended to build upon the progress that has already been made and support a period of consolidation and growing organisational maturity. The challenge now is to deliver on the vision established through the Community Service Plan and create a culture that supports this vision. The development, support and morale of Service employees must be at the centre of all our plans and the measure of our progress going forward.

This Strategy sets out the aims and objectives of the Human Resources function over the next three years, the likely impacts of internal and external drivers, and the ways in which these will be achieved.

INTRODUCTION

Since the adoption of the original HR Strategy, a number of national strategies have been adopted which set out priorities for the way that Fire and Rescue Authorities manage Human Resource issues. These include the adoption of:

- A National CFOA Human Resources Strategy
- A National Learning and Development Framework
- A National Equalities Strategy
- A Framework for Fire and Rescue Services (Parts 5 and 6)
- A ten year Occupational Health Strategy (Department of Health)
- Core values for the Fire Service

Additionally there has been significant progress in regional collaboration, with the advent of the Regional Management Board and functional working groups. In terms of human resources, the adoption of a regional Human Resources and Equalities Strategies and the review of Integrated Common Services has established a direction for future developments and closer collaborative working between FRA's. Regional Firefighter recruitment and Assessment and Development Centres for Supervisory and Middle Managers are now firmly embedded as regional practice, and a number of policy frameworks have been established through the regional HR Project Group.

The region is working closely with the Local Authorities Controlled Company (LACC) to manage through the successful transfer of Control room functions from 2009 and this will present a significant challenge on a number of fronts, not least for the management of staffing resources both before and after cut-over to the new Regional Control Centre.

The Service itself has undergone a significant re-structure of its services, and the way they are delivered. The Health and Safety section now forms part of the HR function within a Corporate Services Department. The Community Service Plan 2006-09 has been established as the blueprint for delivery of effective community-based provision and will be the measure of how effectively the Service is performing. Effective Human Resource management underpins all aspects of this Plan.

FUTURE DRIVERS

Looking ahead to issues which may become future drivers for change within the life of this Strategy, significant issues will include:

Legislative changes which will see the consolidation of equalities legislation into a single body of law, extensions to current work-life balance provisions for working parents, and European Directives on Health and Safety regulations;

The outcomes of the local cultural audit and change programme and integration of our core values as part of our culture and way of doing things (i.e. led by our commitment to Continuous Improvement, People, Diversity, Service);

Greater emphasis on shared common services;

The Regional HR Strategy;

The adoption of a national Occupational Health Strategy;

An increased focus on flexible working arrangements and transformation of the workplace;

Impacts of the Gershon Review which will increasingly impact on the funding available to deliver services;

Increased inter-service collaboration, specifically in the development of national resilience and contingency planning;

Outcomes of Comprehensive Performance Assessment

The role of the Human Resources function in all of these areas is critical to effective delivery and this Strategy, supported by detailed annual Business Plans, will require constant review to ensure that priorities remain aligned with national, regional and local service objectives.

The structure of the Human Resource function has been, and will continue to be, reviewed to ensure that the appropriate resources and expertise are available to support the Service to achieve its aims.

STRATEGIC VISION

The CFOA National Human Resource Strategy sets out the key principles which should underpin the management of people within the Fire Service.

These are:

- Leadership
- Organisational Development
- Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce
- Resourcing
- Recognition and reward
- Developing the capacity of HR

LEADERSHIP

The Service will strive to appoint and develop leaders throughout the organisation who will :

- § Share and champion organisational values
- § Be fair and inclusive in their treatment of others
- § Embrace diversity
- § Motivate their teams through example and bring out and develop the potential of others
- § Identify priorities and deliver effective results
- § Be committed to self improvement

The Service will support and develop the leadership capacity of its managers at all levels of the organisation. It will identify potential future leaders, and develop and encourage leadership qualities in middle and supervisory managers through structured development programmes, underpinned by the Assessment and Development Centre approach, and through exposure to opportunities which develop a strength and depth of experience and decision-making skills. By 2010 the Service will have developed a leadership model that will be applicable to managers across functional, operational and specialist roles.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Service will strive to continuously improve its performance by being self-aware and open to change. It will seek to engage with all its employees to promote a culture that is supportive and inclusive, with a shared goals and values, but where individual differences and talents are recognised and developed.

The organisation's structure and working arrangements will be kept under review to ensure that they support the achievement of Service objectives whilst still retaining the flexibility to adapt and respond to business or individual needs. The aim being to create a balance between customer focused service delivery and work-life balance This will require us to look at issues creatively and outside of a mindset in which "one size fits all" in the environment in which we operate.

We will seek to break down barriers between duty systems and across professional and functional areas to promote "joined up" working and promote efficiency by creating a culture that encourages co-operation and open-ness through cross-functional working and engagement.

This will be supported by an approach to employee relations which is based on effective two-way communication, ongoing formal and informal dialogue and a positive commitment to seek mutual agreement wherever possible.

Finally, the ability of the Service to meet its objectives will be managed and monitored through robust performance management processes to ensure delivery and continuous improvement.

DEVELOPING THE SKILLS AND CAPACITY OF THE WORKFORCE

The Service is committed to building on the IPDS framework to raise the levels of training, development and performance and skills within the organisation. Particular emphasis will be placed on developing the risk critical skills of front line employees, whilst developing a career path for technical and specialist staff to support operational assurance. The basis for this will be the application of the National Occupational Standards to different roles within the Service and will be centred upon work place assessment. By 2010 the Service will ensure that all operational personnel will either have been assessed as competent through a verifiable process or be on a development programme.

The focus of our Learning and Development strategy is to equip our employees with essential skills for their work, provide opportunity to extend their knowledge and skills through Continuous Professional Development and support those with potential to develop in to their next role.

The development of first-line managers across the organisation will be an important priority and an investment for the future. The aim is to ensure that all supervisory managers will have progressed through the Supervisory Development Programme, or have accessed relevant learning opportunities by applying a modular approach to skills development. The Personal Development Review process will feed into this by identifying skills and knowledge gaps and producing individual development plans.

The Service Learning and Development Centre will work to provide a variety of learning access points and methods to meet organisational, team and individual skills gaps to meet the differing learning styles of our employees. This will include technical courses, modular programmes, distance and flexible learning opportunities, workplace/vocational development and academic routes. The Service will also seek to engage with external agencies to improve basic skills such as literacy and numeracy and develop IT awareness. Wherever possible the Service will seek recognition for individual vocational achievement through relevant Awarding Bodies such as EdExcel and the Institute of Fire Engineers.

The value of Personal Development Reviews is recognised as the way by which the Service can identify and nurture individual potential and the most effective way by which corporate priorities and targets can be cascaded throughout the organization. The PDR process will be supported and improved during this 3 year period so that it becomes truly embedded within our performance management processes and underpins our Learning and Development Programmes.

RESOURCING

Through effective Workforce Planning, the Service will ensure that it is able to recruit and retain people with appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to deliver its strategic objectives.

We will seek to attract and retain the highest quality of applicant for all job roles through effective selection processes, remove unnecessary barriers to ensure equal access and endeavour to promote the Service as an employer of choice. At higher levels of the organisation this will entail multi-tier entry.

Particular emphasis will be placed on encouraging a diverse range of applicants to consider employment with the Service and positive action measures will be taken, where we have an under-representation in our workforce, to engage with people and appropriate representative groups to promote the fire service as a career.

We will continue to support and develop the Regional Firefighter Selection process.

RECOGNITION AND REWARD

The Service will seek to refine and develop its pay strategy within the framework of national pay agreements and within the spirit of reward for competence. This will be reflected in the arrangement for recognition of Continuous Professional Development for uniformed personnel and through job evaluation (including rank to role and job sizing) and other means of recognising individual performance.

Where appropriate, and affordable, the Service may need to consider local flexibility in terms of pay arrangements for different groups of staff in response to skills shortages, accelerated progression or the promotion of variable working arrangements.

The underlying fundamental of all our pay systems will be ensuring equality and consistency and implementing processes which recognise equal pay for work of equal value and are compliant with relevant legislation..

In addition to pay, the Service will seek to provide non-cash benefits to its employees, which will enhance its status as an employer of choice and promote the well-being and options open to its employees.

DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY OF HR

The Service acknowledges the impact of good people management policies and practice, and application of good HR management skills, in effecting and supporting organisational change and service delivery.

At a strategic level, the HR function will play a key role in ensuring that organisational policies and working practices comply with statutory provisions and reflect best HR practice. Additionally, through its HR Strategy and annual Business and Workforce Plans, the Service will set out its strategic direction and vision for the development of its workforce, ensure that HR objectives align with and support the Community Safety Plan and that it is properly resourced to deliver on organisational priorities.

At an operational level, the Service will ensure that professional HR business partner support and advice is readily accessible to service managers and that all managers take responsibility for the effective HR management of their teams. In particular, managers will be tasked with reducing the level of short-term absence within their teams. A suite of HR policies and guidance will be developed and continuously updated and maintained to ensure consistency of approach and compliance with good practice. Such policies will be subject to consultation with the representative bodies, and other stakeholders, to ensure the participation and engagement of the workforce in establishing a HR management framework.

SERVICE VALUES

Through the active engagement of our employees, we will seek to promote and apply values and principles that are centred on:

Service to the Community through working with others, treating everyone fairly and with respect, being answerable to those we serve and striving for excellence in all we do

People by practicing and promoting fairness and respect for others, recognition of merit, acting with honesty, integrity and mutual trust, cooperative and inclusive working and supporting personal development

Diversity by treating everyone fairly and with respect, providing varying solutions for different needs and expectations, promoting equal opportunities in employment and progression with the service

Improvement by accepting responsibility for our performance, being open-minded, considering criticism thoughtfully, learning from our experience and consulting others.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At a local level, this Strategy will aim to achieve the following key objectives:

Contribute to the management of corporate risk by

“Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, identifying and providing advice on individual and corporate risk to the organisation”

Support the delivery of the Community Safety Plan by

“Working with others in the organization to develop partnerships that support the delivery of the Plan, with the focus on Fire and Rescue Service staff and Workforce Development”

Ensure effective workforce planning by

“Linking the HR Business Plan to the corporate plan and working with others to support achievement of their business objectives, identifying and planning for change and ensuring that the organization has the skills and resources to meet future needs”

Support all employees through effective Human Resource policies and practices by

“Creating a work environment where people feel safe, valued and respected and where they are treated fairly ”

Developing people by

“Providing opportunities and support to enable people to achieve their full potential, and be role competent, and through implementation of the Service Learning and Development Strategy”

Support the organisation to develop and improve by

“Facilitating change through effective engagement with the workforce, challenging the existing culture where appropriate, and promoting continuous organizational development and best practice.”

Improve the health and well-being of all its employees by

“Taking a preventative and holistic approach and by reacting to the business needs of the organization. A key aspect of the policy is to continue to reduce the instances and levels of sickness absence across the organisation”

Encourage and promote diversity, equality and fairness by

“Establishing values which encourage an inclusive working environment, free from discrimination and working toward a more diverse workforce which reflects the community we serve, and through implementation of our Equality and Diversity Plan”

Ensure the health and safety of all employees and those affected by Service activities by

“Implementing and maintaining safe systems of work by identifying and assessing work related hazards and applying the necessary risk controls”

Encourage the participation and engagement of employees, representative bodies and stakeholders by

“Consulting stakeholders at the earliest opportunity, ensuring positive engagement, open dialogue, and mutually acceptable outcomes”

Improve work-life balance and flexible working opportunities by

“Developing opportunities for people to balance their personal needs and commitments with the needs of the service”

“Live” our core values by

“Providing a responsive, efficient and high quality service to all our users every time; encouraging respect for other people and an appreciation of different cultures and differing needs of our local communities; supporting continuous service and personal improvement.”



REVIEW

This Strategy will be reviewed as part of the Service's annual planning cycle to ensure that key changes to national or local priorities, or to our operating environment, are identified and incorporated into our priorities.

An evaluation of the Strategy will be undertaken annually to assess our progress and to report into the Human Resources Committee of the Fire & Rescue Authority.

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KEY PRIORITIES: PERSONNEL

PRIORITY	Strategic Link	AIM	TIMESCALES
Integrate Workforce Planning into corporate processes	Resourcing	To ensure that the Service has the resources, skills and direction to achieve its strategic and service objectives	From 2007. Embedded by April 2010.
Support the transfer to Control staff to the Regional Control Centre	Resourcing	To support staff through the transition process, ensure compliance with relevant employment law and the maintenance of the control function to cut-over	Continuous to cut-over to RCC in March 2010
Contribute to the management of the national Firelink project	Resourcing	To provide expert HR advice to the Project Team and ensure compliance with relevant employment law	Continuous to implementation of Firelink system in early 2008
Support regional collaboration	Organisational development	Work with regional HR colleagues to establish shared policies and best practice, and contribute to the workstreams linked to Workforce Development and Integrated Common Services.	Continuous to project end-date or as policy, practice and processes become integrated into local systems
Establish effective processes to support leadership capacity	Leadership	Work with L&D team to identify and develop potential leaders, and develop recruitment, selection and retention strategies to ensure effective leadership across the organisation	Develop a suite of policies and strategies by April 2009
Contribute to strategic decision-making and change management	Organisational development	Contribute to strategic decision making and change management processes through the implementation of effective HR practices and participation in cross function project groups	Ongoing through participation in SMT and PACT meetings, and via the annual business planning process
Implement a business partner approach	Develop the capacity of HR/Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To ensure the provision of effective HR advice and support and developing people management skills across the organisation, adding value to business processes	Ongoing

Implement and develop pay and benefits strategy	Recognition and reward	Ensure the implementation and development of pay and promotion structures across the organisation which will encourage flexibility, retention, acknowledge competence and reward high performance.	Review undertaken through 2008 and strategy in place by April 2009
Develop and maintain HR policy and guidance	Developing the capacity of HR/organisational development	Develop and update key HR policies, procedures and guidance notes and enhance accessibility via the intranet	Intranet access in place by Jan 2008
Reduce absence levels across the organization	Resourcing	Ensure the development and implementation of effective absence management strategies and procedures	From 2007, reductions in absence year on year to April 2010
Promote diversity	Organisational development/ Recourcing	Develop strategies in the recruitment, development and retention of under-represented groups within the workforce and ensure compliance with Equalities Duties	From 2007, year on year increases in Firefighter applications and all appointments from female and BME candidates by April 2010
Enhance flexible working/work-life balance opportunities	Organisational development/ Resourcng	Develop initiatives and working arrangements which will promote a better work-life balance for employees, enhance service delivery and incorporate new/revised regulation and best practice in this area.	From 2007, embedded by April 2010



KEY PRIORITIES: OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

PRIORITY	Strategic Link	AIM	TIMESCALES
Develop an introduce a Corporate Wellbeing strategy	Organisational development/ Developing the capacity of HR	To underpin OH practice and philosophy with a staff Wellbeing strategy. The strategy will pull together all OH and fitness policies and procedures, enabling a more targeted and measurable practice	June 2008
Integrate OH into sickness absence management plan	Organisational development/ resourcing	Provide a triage service, in order to link with internal partners in order to manage moderate to long term ill health more effectively.	December 2008
Develop OH Database and audit system	Organisational development /resourcing/ developing the capacity of HR	A comprehensive system which allows practice measurement and audit , links with other departments and enables the section to identify Ill health trends and hotspots	December 2009
Mobile Health and fitness monitoring	Resourcing/organizational development	A system of mobile health and fitness tests carried out on an annual basis. To replace station based 6 monthly tests and OH based 3 yearly tests	April 2008
Uniforming and modernizing station gyms	Resourcing /Organisational Development	A uniform template for station gyms which is risk assessed maintainable and most importantly enables a safe fit firefighting staff group. This would include the allocation of a small budget for fitness section	Report to SMT December 2007 Work commencing Jan/Feb 2008
Integrated Rehabilitation process	Organisational Development	Linking more effectively with service physio, fitness adviser and watch based trainers to reduce incidents of prolonged ill health through musculo-skeletal disorders.	April 2008
Integrated systems based stress management strategy		To complete the role based risk assessment process. Report to SMT and introduce managing workforce stress course for managers and stress awareness course for all staff. Put role based risk assessments on the intranet and provide links through the intranet to CBT and other help	Report complete Feb 2008 Launch New Policy April 2008

Cognitive Behavioural Coaching	Leadership/organizational development	Work with performance management to investigate cognitive behavioural coaching for under performing employees.	December 2008
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KEY PRIORITIES: HEALTH AND SAFETY

PRIORITY	Strategic link	AIM	TIMESCALES
Further develop the health and safety risk management section's role in NFRS's corporate risk management initiatives	Organisational development	To reduce the incidence of work related injury/illness and incorporate effective risk controls	By August 2009
Introduce an Event recording, reporting and investigation procedure which enables competent line managers to identify and address root causes of episodes of loss	Organisational development	To establish a "root and branch" system of identifying and investigating potential risks and establishing a robust system of reporting and recording events	By June 2008
Move toward closer integration of Occupational Health and Fitness and Safety Risk Management function	Organisational development	To develop an integrated approach to ensure the well being of service employees at work, and thereby reduce the incidents of avoidable work related injury and ill health	By June 2009
Contribute to regional initiatives in the field on employee health, safety and wellbeing	Organisational development	Establish shared policies, procedures and best practice	By June 2008
Support the development of competencies in employee representatives of health and safety including Safety Representatives	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To enable Safety Representatives to play an enhanced role in NFRS's health and safety risk management	By January 2009
Develop a range of risk assessment models and tools which enable line managers to more effectively manage risk	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To provide managers with the tools and knowledge to manage risk and thereby reduce the incidence of accidents at work	By April 2008

KEY PRIORITIES: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

PRIORITY	Strategic link	AIM	COMPLETION DATE
To consolidate and maintain good industrial relations with our Representative Bodies	Organisational development	To maintain effective and positive relationships through continuous informal dialogue, and work to reach a shared understanding of issues through formal consultation/negotiation with employee representatives	Ongoing
To develop and fully utilise the facility offered by the Joint Partnership Forum	Organisational development	To extend regional working and work collaboratively on shared employee relations issues.	Ongoing
To undertake an employee relations “health-check” via ACAS	Organisational development	To seek to improve on areas that are of concern to the representative bodies in relation to existing procedures and processes	
To maintain effective communication with our workforce	Organisational development	To ensure that our employees feel informed about issues that affect them.	
To reduce the likelihood of workplace conflict	Organisational development	To work in partnership with representative bodies to identify potential areas of conflict at an early stage and promote flexibility on both sides as the basis for resolving problems and achieving mutually acceptable outcomes	
To promote the participation of all employees at all levels	Organisational development	To engage with employees through team meetings and workplace forums and provide opportunities for opinions to be fed back to senior managers	
To ensure the active engagement of members of the Strategic Management Team in Joint Negotiation and Consultation Panels	Organisational development	To recognise the role of the JNCP forums, as key stakeholders in the Service, as an integral part of corporate management processes	
To ensure the full involvement of Human Resources in employee relations issues	Developing the capacity of HR	For HR professionals to work with managers at local and strategic levels to facilitate effective solutions to individual or collective issues, and to develop policies which promote positive employee relations.	

To reduce the number of formal grievances	Organisational development	To place the emphasis on resolving potential areas of grievance at a local level through mediation rather than through formal processes	
To establish agreed local procedures in relation to disciplinary, capability and ill-health retirement	Organisational development	To ensure that agreed processes are perceived as fair and proportionate, and thereby reduce the likelihood of challenge	
To work closely with the appropriate employee representatives during the transition period to the transfer of Control staff to the RCC in 2010	Organisational development	To develop a positive relationship which is based upon a shared commitment to support Control staff through transition.	

KEY PRIORITIES: LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PRIORITY	Strategic link	AIM	TIMESCALES
To develop a Leadership Skills Development Strategy centred on the national ASPIRE programme and Strategic Manager programme	Leadership	To apply best practice to the development of senior managers within the Service	By April 2009
To support and extend the regional Middle Management Development Programme	Leadership / Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To continuously develop the Middle Management Programme and extend to RDS and support personnel	From April 2008
To support continuous professional development	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To provide means by which employees can maintain their competence and develop their professional skills and understanding throughout their career	Ongoing
To Integrate PDR processes to support corporate priorities	Organisational development	To refine the PDR process to ensure the delivery of service priorities through individual development plans and targeted training	By April 2008
To develop basic and life skills training	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To equip the workforce with a range of skills which will enhance their work performance and assist those seeking redeployment	By April 2009
To enhance command and control skills	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To further assess and develop decision making of operational incident commanders through simulation exercises	By April 2008
To develop a range of blended learning methods for supervisory and PQA based development as part of a distance learning approach	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To improve access to development opportunities, with particular emphasis on extending opportunities to Retained Duty Personnel	By April 2008

To seek recognition for individual achievement of competence that will contribute to the development of transferable skills, knowledge and understanding	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	Research and implement processes for the recognition/approval from awarding bodies across vocational and development courses. Implement workplace assessment processes and APL frameworks.	From 2007
To upskill employees to enable them to fully utilise a range of IT applications	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce / Organisational development	To ensure that the workforce are fully conversant with generic IT applications (MIS, Windows suite) and can populate, modify and interrogate relevant databases to improve the integrity and analysis of performance data	By Sept 2008
To develop and maintain specialist rescue and technical skills	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To ensure that operatives have the skills, competence and understanding to operate new equipment/ use specialist rescue techniques effectively and safely	Ongoing. Firelink by Jan 2008 Working at height by April 2008 CS/Command vehicle by Sept 2008 Specialist Rescue Team by Oct 2008
To develop an Elected Member development and support programme	Organisational development	To develop the skills and understanding of CFA members	By April 2008
To deliver training and provide development opportunities to Control staff in preparation for transfer to RCC or redeployment into alternate roles	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To ensure that Control staff have the skills to place them in the best position for selection to RCC roles or for alternative employment	From April 2008- March 2010
To support the introduction of Service Core Values through individual and team development	Organisation development	To play a part in introducing and embedding the core values adopted by the Service to underpin its service ethic	From Jan 2008
To contribute to the development of a framework for regional working and collaboration	Organisational development	To develop SDC as a regional resource for learning and development and work with regional partners to develop common programmes and cross-FRS working.	From 2007

KEY PRIORITIES: EQUALITIES

PRIORITY	Strategic link	AIM	COMPLETION DATE
To develop implement policies and strategies to ensure compliance with the Equality Duties (gender, race, disability), specifically in the area of service delivery	Organisational development	To ensure that service provision, delivery and the procurement of services/goods afford equality of access and opportunity to all people within our community	From 2007
To review and promote initiatives to take forward the six strands of equality in employment legislation (gender, race, disability, religion & belief, sexual orientation and age)	Organisational development/ Resourcing	To ensure that practice in the areas of recruitment and employment afford equality of access and opportunity to our employees, job applicants and relevant stakeholders	From 2007
To review, refresh and enhance employment and diversity training across the workforce	Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To identify gaps in current training provision and ensure that equality forms part of induction and development programmes, and the assessment of competence	April 2009
To ensure that pay systems comply with equal pay legislation	Organisational development/ Recognition and reward	To review current pay policy, identify and address any anomalies which may be subject to challenge under equal pay legislation	April 2009
To improve the diversity of our workforce to reflect the composition of the community	Resourcing	To increase the numbers of job applicants from under-represented groups through positive action measures, with emphasis on Firefighter recruitment	From 2007
To introduce effective mediation measures as part of harassment and bullying procedures	Organisational development / Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce	To deal with allegations of harassment and bullying through early intervention and application of conflict resolution techniques by managers, where appropriate	Dec 2008

To fully implement Equality Impact Assessment as part of corporate planning and implementation strategies	Organisational development	To ensure that all policies, practices and service delivery take account of any potential impacts on specific groups identified through the EIA process	From 2007
To extend engagement with local communities to take forward the Community Safety message and ensure understanding of the Regulatory Reform Act	Organisational development	To reduce avoidable fire related and other risks through effective intervention and prevention	From 2008
To improve existing monitoring measures	Organisational development/ Resourcing	To report on key performance measures in the areas of employment, service delivery and incident analysis to inform future decision making	From 2008
To extend current consultation methods	Organisational development	To seek opportunities to engage with the community as part of a continuous feedback process	
To gain “sign up” from our workforce to our Core Values as part of a cultural change programme	Organisational development	To ensure that our workforce understand and contribute to the concept of diversity as an integral part of fire service culture	From 2007
To work to achieve Level 4 of the Equality Standards for Local Government	Organisational development	To achieve level 3 of the Equality Standards for Local Government and work toward Level 4	Level 3 by April 2008 Level 4 by April 2010
To review the implications of the likely consolidation of equalities legislation into a single body of law	Organisational development	To ensure that policies and working practices comply with a new/revised legislative framework	
To consider and implement the recommendations of the ODPM Diversity Happens! Programme Board	Organisational development	To implement the outcomes of the Board, including new equality employment targets, peer review etc.	As it becomes available

INITIAL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Section Human Resources	Manager Head of Human Resources	Date of Assessment November 2007	New or Existing New
Name of Policy/Service/Procedure to be assessed		Human Resources Strategy	
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/service/procedure	To set out the key Human Resource issues for the Service, and to establish the aims and objectives which will underpin the priorities for the HR Dept during the life of the current Community Safety Plan.		
2. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and what are the outcomes?	Fire Authority Members, Strategic Management Team, all Service employees, HR team members will be more aware of current and pending HR issues, and the overall strategic direction of HR within the service. The Strategy is intended to assist in the understanding, management and evaluation of HR related activities during the life of the Community Safety Plan.		
3. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy/service/procedure?	Fire Authority Members, Strategic Management Team, all Service employees, representative bodies, HR team members, Service users		

4. Who implements and who is responsible for the policy/service/procedure?	The Head of Human Resources is responsible for implementing and delivering the Strategy through the functional HR Service Heads.
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5. Please identify the differential impact in the terms of the six strands below. Please tick yes if you have identified any differential impacts. Please state evidence of negative or positive impacts below.

STRAND	Y	N	NEGATIVE IMPACT	POSITIVE IMPACT
Race				The ethos of the Strategy is to engender a work environment and culture which is inclusive, respectful and fair, and where practices and attitudes do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate on the grounds of race. Specifically, to implement measures which promote the fire service as a career of choice and increase the numbers of BEM applicants who apply and are successful in obtaining a Firefighter appointment. Through the Equality strand of the Strategy, measures have been established to engage positively with service users from different backgrounds and ensure that racial differences and needs are acknowledged through training and cultural awareness programmes that ensure equal access to service provision .

Gender				<p>The ethos of the Strategy is to engender a work environment and culture which is inclusive, respectful and fair, and where practices and attitudes do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate on the grounds of gender. Specifically, to implement measures to promote the fire service as a career of choice and increase the number of women who apply and are successful in obtaining a Firefighter appointment. Equal pay will be identified and addressed through a review of current pay systems.</p>
Disability				<p>The ethos of the Strategy is to engender a work environment and culture which is inclusive, respectful and fair, and where practices and attitudes do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate on the grounds of disability. Additionally, to ensure that employment practices and policies are compliant with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, and that reasonable adjustments are implemented to assist disabled persons to access and remain in employment.</p>

Religion or Belief				<p>The ethos of the Strategy is to engender a work environment and culture which is inclusive, respectful and fair, and where practices and attitudes do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief. Through a process of education, awareness raising and community engagement , service employees will acquire a better understanding of comparative religions/beliefs, and Service policies and practices will be reviewed to ensure that service provision takes account of appropriate issues.</p>
Sexuality				<p>The ethos of the Strategy is to engender a work environment and culture which is inclusive, respectful and fair, and where practices and attitudes do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. This will be achieved through a process of education, awareness raising and challenge where appropriate. Policies will be developed to address relevant issues.</p>
Age				<p>The ethos of the Strategy is to engender a work environment and culture which is inclusive, respectful and fair, and where practices and attitudes do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate on the grounds of age.</p>

6. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group?	Y	N	7. Should the policy/service proceed to a full impact assessment?	Y	N
					X

I am satisfied that this policy has been successfully impact assessed. I understand the impact assessment of this policy is a statutory obligation and that, as owners of this policy, we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this process.

Signed (completing person) HR Manager (Corporate).....
Signed (Head of Section).....

Date November 2007.....
Date.....

